(d) BSNL has already placed an Advance Purchase Order (APO) on the successful bidder. The bidder has accepted the offer by submitting Purchase Bank Guarantee (PBG) with some conditions, which are under evaluation. Equipment is expected to be progressively available in about six months time from the date of acceptance of Purchase Order.

New subscribers for mobile services

1236. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether during four months (March-June 2007), the telecom operators in the country added 14.6 million new subscribers for mobile services;

(b) whether the public sector BSNL added just one million to its mobile subscriber base across 21 circles during this period and pushed down to fourth place;

(c) whether consumers feel that BSNL's decline is bad for them as in the past, both BSNL and MTNL had played crucial roles in beating down call tariffs especially roaming charges; and

(d) the steps which are being planned to regain the share of subscriber base both for BSNL and MTNL?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) During the four month period from March to June, 2007, telecom operators in the country added 22.51 million subscribers for wireless services.

(b) BSNL has contributed to overall mobile growth by adding 2.98 million connections during this period.

(c) and (d) Due to mobile equipment capacity constraints, BSNL growth has been comparatively lesser. BSNL has already placed an Advance Purchase Order (APO) on the successful bidder. The bidder has accepted the offer by submitting Purchase Bank Guarantee (PBG) with some conditions, which are under evaluation. Equipment is expected to be progressively available in about six months time from the date of acceptance of Purchase Order. MTNL has already taken steps for expansion of mobile network by 750 K lines each in Delhi and Mumbai and the equipment is being installed. The two PSUs are making all efforts to improve their market share.

Poor quality of services

1237. SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether TRAI has recently expressed its displeasure regarding poor quality of service provided by private service providers both in the fields of land line and mobile telephony;

(b) if so, the specific areas where improvements are needed; and

(c) the action taken by TRAI to improve the services to the desired level?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) Yes, Sir. Recently Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), in meetings with the service providers, expressed its concern for the poor quality of service provided by them in respect of certain Quality of Service (QoS) parameters as prescribed in TRAI's regulation on QoS, both for Basic and Cellular Mobile Telephone Services.

(b) As per the performance monitoring report submitted by the service providers to TRAI for quarter ending March 2007, the parameters where the improvement is needed in general are Provision of Telephones (New connection after registration of demand), Fault incidences, Mean Time to Repair, Call Completion Rate, Customer Care and Percentage of calls answered by operator (voice to voice) for Basic Services. Whereas, in the case of Cellular Services, the parameter which need to be improved are Percentage of calls answered (voice to voice).

(c) TRAI had earlier issued a Quality of Service (QoS) regulation in July 2000 and subsequently modified in July 2005 so as to benchmark various QoS parameters for basic and cellular mobile services. In the recently held meetings, TRAI has made it amply clear to the service providers that they must meet the quality of service parameters by improving the deficient areas.

TRAI has been monitoring the performance of service providers against the benchmarks for various Quality of Service parameters through:

(i) quarterly performance monitoring reports;

(ii) monthly congestion reports on the parameter Point of Interconnection (POI) congestion;

(iii) independent agency to assess the Quality of Service provided by the services providers; and

(iv) periodical surveys by independent agency to assess the customer perception of service, against the Quality of Service benchmarks.

TRAI has issued show cause notices on 06.03.2006 to six mobile operators, in whose network the number of POI having congestion above the prescribed benchmark has increased. These operators have since moved Telecom Dispute Settlement and Appellate Tribunal (TDSAT) against the show cause notices and the matter is *sub-judice*.

Post offices in rented buildings

1238. SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of post offices other than non-departmental ones in Karnataka which are housed in rented buildings and the annual rent paid therefor;

(b) whether any programme has been drawn up to acquire land and provide funds for the construction of buildings to house such post offices; and